

Access

March is
Reading Month

March

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Coming to MeL: the MeL Catalog and a Digital Collection

by Kathy Cadwallader, Michigan Library Consortium

The Library of Michigan is planning to expand the services offered as part of the Michigan eLibrary (MeL) by adding two new features – the MeL catalog and a collection of digital images related to Michigan history.

The Library of Michigan is working toward implementing the MeL catalog, a statewide resource sharing system. This would allow anyone, regardless of location, to see the holdings of any library that has included its holdings in the system. To place a request for a book or other item, the searcher would have to be a patron in good standing at a participating Michigan library. If the resident's local library has agreed to participate in the resource sharing system, he or she would be able to place a request for the item and have it delivered to a designated library.

On December 23, 2002, the Michigan Library Consortium (MLC) posted a request for information (RFI) on behalf of the Library of Michigan. We are seeking information from vendors for a solution that will produce the MeL catalog and for a portal that will bring together all of the components of MeL. An electronic copy of this RFI (PDF) may be found on the Web at <http://accessmichigan.org/mel-catalogrfi.pdf>.



After the Library of Michigan and the MeL catalog steering committee have reviewed the responses to the RFI, a request for proposal (RFP) for the MeL Catalog and portal will be issued in March 2003. We hope to have a vendor chosen by May 2003. Implementation will begin this summer. To plan for implementation, libraries have been asked to fill out a survey about their readiness for, and interest in, participating in the MeL catalog. Any questions about the RFI or the survey should be directed to Kathy Cadwallader at cadwallk@mlcnet.org or (800) 530-9019, x13.

Another addition to MeL will be a collection of digital images from *The Making of Modern Michigan*, a statewide digitization project. Michigan State University serves as the administrative host for the project, in cooperation with the Library of Michigan, MLC and seven regional digitization centers.

The *Making of Modern Michigan* project aims at empowering a wide range of libraries, smaller libraries in particular, to contribute to a digital collection about the state's history. Library staff will be trained in digitization techniques, copyright issues, and metadata standards and will have access to digitization equipment and technical assistance in regional digitization centers located throughout the state. For more information about the project, see the article in this issue of *Access* or visit <http://mmm.lib.msu.edu/>.



Notes from the State Librarian

March is reading month in Michigan; what better time to highlight yet again the importance of libraries, our myriad services and the many ways in which libraries touch lives.

A few weeks ago, I attended the American Library Association mid-winter conference in Philadelphia. On the first leg of my trip home, I took a taxi to the airport and had a great conversation with the taxi driver, a native of Belarus. He said he had been in the United States for one year and was working to make enough money to go back to Belarus and continue his college studies.

When he found out that I was a librarian, he asked me in broken English if I had heard of Oscar Wilde. I said, "Of course," and he grinned and held up a copy of a book by Wilde. The driver said he was almost finished with it and couldn't wait until he had enough money to buy another Wilde book.

I asked him if he knew about his local public library. Looking confusedly at me, he said he didn't know that he could use a library if he was not enrolled in a university. Well, the dialogue flew from that point on! I told him all about how public libraries work and said he would be more than welcome in any Philadelphia public library.

This man was absolutely amazed and rapidly asked questions about the library. When we arrived at the airport, he was so excited from our conversation that I had to remind him to collect the fare! My exchange with this taxi driver made me consider again how much we take for granted the opportunities afforded us by the U.S. public-library system.

In tough economic times and a changing informational landscape, I know we often feel the need to justify our existence with how up-to-date the library is, how technologically savvy we are, or how many formats we offer. During this month dedicated to the simple joy of reading, I'd like to remind us all that a library's most basic service — lending books to people for free — is pretty phenomenal all by itself.

Kristie

New Technologies in Libraries Workshop

by Karrie Waarala, Continuing Education Specialist, Library of Michigan

Learn about the newest and upcoming technologies to help you better serve your patrons — and yourself! — at the *New Technologies in Libraries Workshop* being held 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Friday, March 21.

Favorite technology gurus Richard Truxall and Melissa White will be presenting this workshop in the Library of Michigan's Lake Ontario Room. The workshop will also be available via videoconference at the Peter White Public Library in Marquette.

The cost is \$20, and 0.3 CEUs will be available; 0.3 SB-CEUs have been applied for as well. To register, visit our Web site at <http://www.michigan.gov/hal>. If you have any questions, please contact Karrie Waarala at 517-373-3746 or kwaarala@michigan.gov.

Library of Michigan Hosts 2003 Rural Libraries Conference

by Karrie Waarala, Continuing Education Specialist, Library of Michigan

The Library of Michigan invites you to join us for the 2003 Rural Libraries Conference being held May 5-7 at beautiful Mission Point Resort on Mackinac Island. This year's conference offers a schedule packed with informative sessions, dynamite keynote speakers and terrific opportunities to visit with vendors. A total of 1.2 CEUs are available to participants who participate in all of the concurrent sessions and spend time with the vendors.

For a full conference schedule, registration forms, and Mission Point reservation details, please visit our Web site at <http://www.michigan.gov/hal> and follow the links "For the Professional," "Libraries, Librarians & Media Specialists," and "Certification and Continuing Education" from the main page. Copies of the agenda and registration forms have been mailed to all public libraries in the state as well.

The Rural Libraries Conference is funded with a Library Services and Technology Act grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, administered by the Library of Michigan, with support from the Library of Michigan Foundation through a bequest from former State Librarian Loleta Fyan.

If you have any questions, please contact Karrie Waarala at 517-373-3746 or kwaarala@michigan.gov. We hope to see you there!

Making of Modern Michigan: Statewide Digitization Project Underway

by Ruth Ann Jones, Michigan State University Libraries

A statewide digitization project, "The Making of Modern Michigan," is now underway, thanks to funding from the Institute for Museum and Library Services. The project is designed to encourage and empower libraries throughout the state to digitize their rare and valuable local history collections.

Michigan State University serves as the administrative home for the project, which is establishing six regional digitization centers, where training and access to digitization equipment will be available to libraries participating in the project. In addition, the project will provide assistance in obtaining permission to digitize copyright-protected materials and tools for creating catalog records for images and other digital objects.

All libraries in Michigan are eligible to take part. Participants will receive both formal and informal training. The formal training sessions will be held periodically at the regional centers and will address such areas as selecting collections for digitization, copyright issues, technical considerations such as file formats and cataloging digitized materials. After completing this training, participants will be able to schedule time at the digitization center to work on their own library's digitization project. At that time, digitization center staff will be available for hands-on orientations, consultation and assistance.

The regional digitization centers will be located in Detroit (Wayne State University and University of Detroit-Mercy), Kalamazoo (Western Michigan University), East Lansing (Michigan State University), Traverse City (Traverse Area District Library) and Escanaba (Escanaba Public Library, a member of the Superiorland Library Cooperative). Upper Peninsula participants should note that the center hosted by Superiorland will be in Escanaba, rather than Marquette. With digitization being performed near home by their own staff members, libraries will be able to retain control over their rare and irreplaceable holdings.

The result of "The Making of Modern Michigan" will be an easily accessible digital collection that highlights unique primary sources in Michigan libraries and illustrates the state's history for students, researchers and lifelong learners.

For more information, see the project Web site at <http://mmm.lib.msu.edu/> or contact Ruth Ann Jones at the Michigan State University Libraries (jonesr@msu.edu).

InMICH: Delivering Library Materials Across the State

by Debbi Schaubman, Michigan State University

Finding the right materials for a school project, to answer questions for small business owners, or to get the next novel in a series gets easier and easier for patrons of the libraries participating in InMICH, a statewide, multitype resource-sharing program funded by Library of Michigan-administered LSTA grants. Patrons have been thrilled by the ability to search over 7 million items with a single search, the speedy response of the catalog to those searches (measured in milliseconds!), the ease of requesting materials and the arrival of those materials in 3 to 5 days.

November 2002 marked the second anniversary of InMICH. The program has grown considerably over the years, with dramatic increases in the number of materials flowing through the system as well as in the number of participating libraries. The project has also seen a considerable spread in its geographic reach, with the inclusion of libraries from west Michigan and the Upper Peninsula as well as additional southeast and mid-Michigan participants. The number of different types of participating library systems is also increasing – the InMICH membership now includes libraries using systems from Innovative Interfaces and epixtech, as well as two systems (Athena and Winnebago) produced by the Sagebrush Corporation.

Originally formed with a handful of participants (Albion College and Albion Public Library, East Lansing Public Library, Grand Rapids Community College, Michigan State University, Ovid-Elsie Area Libraries and Southfield Public Library), the consortium now includes 28 libraries, eleven of which are currently "live" on the system: the original libraries plus Bloomfield Township Public Library, Central Michigan University, Kalamazoo College, the Library of Michigan and West Bloomfield Public Library. The Capital Area District Library and the University of Michigan-Dearborn are scheduled to come up soon.

Patrons of three Upper Peninsula public libraries (Bayliss, Escanaba and Peter White) are expected to enjoy InMICH access in early spring 2003. The remaining libraries, all members of the Mideastern Michigan Library Cooperative, extend InMICH's reach by bringing the service to residents of Lapeer and Shiawassee counties, as well as to additional residents of Oakland County. These libraries (Corunna

Public Library, Dryden Township Library, Edna C. Bentley Memorial Library, Holly Township Library, Laingsburg Public Library, North Branch Township Library, Ruth Hughes Memorial District Library, Shiawassee County Library, Shiawassee District Library and Vernon District Public Library) will be “live” on InMICH by late Spring 2003.

Over 10,000 requests have been placed through InMICH since November 2000, with a consistent increase in the number of requests placed in a given month (e.g., October 2001 vs. October 2002). Although some of that increase can be attributed to the additional libraries using the system, the average use per library has more than doubled over time. The number of requests placed is not, however, the only measure of the project’s success – just as important, if not more so, InMICH libraries have been able to fill over 80 percent of those requests. A number of participating libraries have also seen significant decreases in their use of OCLC for inter-library loan. As there are no charges between InMICH libraries, this translates to money saved!

InMICH is based on Innovative Interfaces software running on a server housed at the Michigan Library Consortium. It is a “physical” union catalog – the bibliographic and holdings information from participating libraries are loaded into a single online catalog. This allows the system to de-dup records as they are loaded rather than each time a search is executed. Staff at participating libraries love the fact that record updates are sent to InMICH as they occur and automatically. There are no patron records on the InMICH server; patron verification (and checking for blocks) is handled by communication between the central InMICH system and the patron’s local library system.

That InMICH is based on a physical union catalog allows us to take on an exciting challenge – late spring 2003 will see the addition of a new participating library that is not yet automated! This will take InMICH into new territory as we create a mechanism that will not only permit the inclusion of that library’s holdings in the online union catalog but will make possible patron-initiated requests from that library. The library will also have the ability to lend its materials through InMICH.

Although only patrons of participating libraries can request materials through InMICH, everyone everywhere can experience the speed and breadth of the catalog: <http://inmich.mlc.lib.mi.us>. Additional project information is available at <http://inmich.lib.msu.edu>.

Library of Michigan: The Civil War Era



by Jim Schultz, Department of History, Arts and Libraries

On January 27, 1859, Jesse Eugene Tenney became Michigan’s state librarian. Eighteen months later, Michigan and the rest of the nation were plunged into the Civil War. In Tenney, the state had for the first time someone who worked aggressively to fulfill the role of the state librarian and actively define a more significant role for the library. Tenney, a highly educated lawyer who had also served as a school principal and superintendent, was the first appointee to stay in the position for more than three years and the last male state librarian for over 100 years.

The State Library was located within the first State Capitol in Lansing, a relatively small building where space was always at a premium. Like many state librarians before him, Tenney worked hard to increase the collection despite the lack of space. When he became librarian in 1859, there were roughly 13,000 books in the collection, and when his term ended a decade later, there were over 24,000 volumes in the State Library. One of the ways Tenney accomplished this was by using both the University of Michigan and Michigan Agricultural College (present-day Michigan State University) as book depositories until more space became available in the library. Another method was to link with other organizations. For example, some of the materials that increased the library’s collection were documents from the federal government, as the library had become a designated federal document depository in 1860.

Although Michigan’s home front was never a battleground during the Civil War, the war affected every aspect of the state and its citizens. Michigan sent 90,000 men to serve in the Union forces. On the home front, mining, lumbering and railroads became major contributors to the war effort. Newspaper readership increased as people followed the war’s daily progress. They also followed the exploits of Michigan soldiers through letters and could read about the feats of Michiganders like George Custer in national publications like *Harpers Weekly*. Newspapers of that time rarely used headlines, yet the headlines in the 1861 *Detroit Free Press* reflected Michigan’s immediate reaction, literally shouting, “War! War! War!”

The shelling of Fort Sumter in South Carolina on April 12, 1861, brought Michigan into the war to save the Union. Michigan's response reflected the high idealism with which the war began, sending some of first troops from the west to Washington just in time to engage in the battle of Bull Run. It was a desperate situation that saw the Union forces defeated and a realization on both sides about the horrors of war.

Yet, through all this turmoil, the state government carried on in an orderly manner without any major interruptions. Throughout the 1860s, State Librarian Tenney's annual reports mention a concern for library administration more than the Civil War and its effect on the library's operation.

Jesse Eugene Tenney was not the first state librarian, but he was first who was able to wield political power to develop the position from a sometimes librarian and/or custodian to a full time professional librarian. Tenney was another of the long line of well-educated New Englanders who assumed leadership positions within the young state of Michigan, moving here from Vermont in the mid-1850s.

As state librarian, Tenney began his advocacy by submitting the longest library report the Legislature had seen up to this time, which reflected Tenney's strength for identifying and reporting the practical details necessary for the function of a professional state library. The report also called attention to the lack of legislative support for the library and included an in-depth account of the past two decades of State Library administration. Through this report, Tenney made the Legislature aware that no money had been given to the library for over a decade. He then proposed an annual appropriation of \$500 for the next five years.

To strengthen his case, Tenney appealed to the competitive nature of the Legislature, comparing Michigan's State Library to other states' and asserting that, "Michigan ought not to be behind her sister states in regard to this manner." He called attention to fact that Illinois annually appropriated \$1,500 for their State Library, Ohio \$2,000, Massachusetts \$2,800 and New York \$6,000. Tenney's strategy apparently worked, for as a result of his report the House Library Committee inspected the library and recommended a \$500 annual appropriation to increase the collection of books, with a note that it should be increased again at a time when the budget could support additional funding. The committee's report noted the "excellent manner in which the library is kept.... by the present faithful and efficient Librarian."

As state librarian, Tenney continued to make statements regarding the war that reflected his patriotic zeal and his pragmatism in State Library mat-

ters. Tenney's report of December 1862 observed that "quite a number of the United States, have been so busily engaged in diving down to 'the lowest deep' of the foulest rebellion which ever challenged the wrath of Almighty God [sic]." Yet well aware as Tenney was of the significance of the Civil War in the scope of history, he could not refrain from calling attention to how the Confederacy's rebelliousness had affected library operations, saying "that their authorities have willfully denied us their usual courtesies by failing to supply us with their accustomed quantum of exchanges." Again in the 1864 State Library Annual Report, he mentions that nine rebel states failed to maintain document exchanges. As in most of his previous reports, Tenney then went on to leverage for things he could control. For example he recommended that plans for a fireproof brick building be drawn up for a future State Library.

Like most people of his time, Tenney held a special regard for the flag. He was well aware of the flag's importance as a symbol and a signaling device on the Civil War battlefield. Tenney also must have known about Michigan soldiers who gave their lives for their "colors." With this in mind, Tenney made several requests for more room to store Civil War battle flags. Although the battle flags ended up being stored in Detroit until the present State Capitol was built, Tenney still gave several reports to the Legislature deploring the lack of space in the library not only for books but to display "tattered ensigns and flags of Michigan's scarred and war-torn veterans."

In 1866 and 1867, Tenney again requested more room, but he also requested something significant to future state librarians – a salary increase. He had gotten many notations of praise from the library committee and the Legislature for the professional manner in which the State Library was administered, and finally in 1867, he received a \$100 raise, making his salary \$600 per year. In 1869, Tenney's salary was raised again to \$700, and the state librarian was authorized to make purchases without approval of the library committee, another step toward recognizing the stature of the state librarian.

Tenney left the library in 1869, leaving a legacy of leadership and respect by bringing several issues regarding the needs of the State Library out into the open. But in spite of all Eugene Tenney's accomplishments, some might argue that his most significant accomplishment was bringing his wife to Michigan from Vermont. For Harriet Tenney not only succeeded her husband as state librarian but began an era of female library leadership that lasted for over a century.



by Casey Kremers, Department of History, Arts and Libraries

Get ready to celebrate! Individuals and organizations around the state are invited to show their Michigan pride and take part in Michigan Week 2003, May 17-26. This annual salute to the best Michigan has to offer dates back to 1954, and this year's festivities focus on Michigan's rich heritage, with the theme "Great Lakes, Great Traditions: Celebrating Michigan's Heritage." Michigan Week is sponsored by the Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries (HAL).

What can libraries do to celebrate Michigan Week? Here are a few ideas.

- Offer a genealogy workshop for adults or a children's family history program.
- Invite a Michigan author to speak at the library.
- Do a display of Read Michigan books and poster. (See the following article for the Read Michigan list.)
- Host a book discussion on one of the Read Michigan books or another book about Michigan or by a Michigan author.
- Ask a local historian to speak about community history or invite a historical re-enactor to bring a bit of Michigan history to life.
- Sponsor a children's program with a Michigan theme. Read aloud from a book by a Michigan author, play a Michigan trivia game, make a historical craft like cornhusk dolls, play Motown music, serve Michigan foods or come up with your own fun Michigan activities.
- Invite an author, artist, photographer or

musician who features Michigan or Great Lakes themes to show/speak about their work.

- Prepare a community history display. Put out a call for photographs and artifacts.
- Offer a program to teach patrons about the many resources available through the Michigan eLibrary.
- Establish a Michigan Week theme for already existing library events or celebrate Michigan Week your own unique way.
- Include the Michigan Week logo on promotional materials for your event, and send out a press release to get the word out. The logo and sample press release are available at www.michigan.gov/hal - click on the Michigan Week button.

However you choose to celebrate Michigan Week, let us here at HAL know about it, and we will include your event in the listing of Michigan Week activities on our Web page. For more information about Michigan Week, visit the Web site listed above or contact Jim Schultz at (517) 373-1586 or schultzjh@michigan.gov.

Read Michigan 2003

Intro by Casey Kremers, Department of History, Arts and Libraries; list and descriptions by Read Michigan! Committee

As Michigan Week 2003 draws near, it's time again for Read Michigan, the Library of Michigan's annual list of recently published books representing the diverse history and culture of our state. A Michigan Week tradition since 1994, Read Michigan gives libraries one way to participate in the celebration – by doing a display of featured books or hosting discussions of the books, for example. Read Michigan posters will be sent to Michigan libraries in the coming weeks.

This year's selection committee – Kim Laird, Randy Riley and Kris Rzepczynski of the Library of Michigan – had many excellent titles to choose from. In narrowing down the list of books about Michigan or by Michigan authors published in 2002, the committee tried to choose those that best reflect Michigan's rich heritage and that feature high-quality writing, high visual impact and wide public appeal. Committee members also had to select a list that covers a wide range of topics and issues important to Michigan residents. No small

task, but the result is a great guide for literary exploration of the Great Lakes state.

The 2003 Read Michigan list:

The American Auto Factory, by Byron Olsen and Joseph Cabadas. Motorbooks International. Emphasizing Michigan's critical role, this book illustrates the history and development of the automotive manufacturing plant from its birth to the present day, including the contributions of Henry Ford, Ransom E. Olds, Walter P. Chrysler and Alfred P. Sloan.

Black Eden: The Idlewild Community, by Lewis Walker and Benjamin C. Wilson. Michigan State University Press. Incorporating oral interviews and photographs, the authors study the African-American resort community in Lake County, its important role as a gathering place and source of cultural identity in a segregated society, and its decline and revitalization.

Detroit Free Press Time Frames: Our Lives in 2001, Our City at 300, Our Legacy in Pictures, edited by Nancy Andrews, Peter Gavrilovich, and Mauricio Gutierrez. Detroit Free Press. Using vivid images from the *Detroit Free Press*, this oversize book captures the essence of Detroit and its environs at the city's 300th anniversary.

The Ford Century: Ford Motor Company and the Innovations That Shaped the World, by Russ Banham. Artisan. Incorporating numerous photographs and archival images, this book celebrates the Ford Motor Company's centennial and explores such important achievements as the assembly line, the famed Model T and the "Arsenal of Democracy" during World War II.

A Good Boat Speaks for Itself: Isle Royale Fishermen and Their Boats, by Timothy Cochrane and Hawk Tolson. University of Minnesota Press. Interviews with commercial fishermen and detailed studies of their fishing boats highlight this rich study of Isle Royale's maritime past.

Hamtramck: The Driven City, by Greg Kowalski. *Making of America* (series). Arcadia Publishing. A history of the tiny ethnic community, complete with a discussion of the city's namesake, its Polish heritage, the closing of the Dodge Main plant and the recent influx of new immigrants. The ongoing *Making of America* series also examines other Michigan communities, including Detroit and Northville.

John Engler: The Man, the Leader, and the Legacy, by Gleaves Whitney. Sleeping Bear Press. Incorporating remarks from both supporters and critics, this biography of Michigan's

46th governor examines his family life, legislative career, gubernatorial achievements and setbacks, and his historical legacy.

Lake Michigan Passenger Steamers, by George W. Hilton. Stanford University Press. This well-illustrated book examines the development, rise and decline of the passenger steamer industry on Lake Michigan and contains detailed corporate histories of the ten major operators, including the Goodrich Transit Company and the Northern Michigan Transportation Company.

Last Year's Jesus: A Novella and Nine Stories, by Ellen Slezak. Theia. The author's Detroit upbringing resonates throughout this debut collection of vivid short stories.

The Log Cabin Church, by Ellen Howard. Illustrated by Ronald Himler. Holiday House. In this children's book set on the Michigan frontier, settlers discuss building a church, as a young girl slowly realizes its importance to the community.

Off to the Side: A Memoir, by Jim Harrison. Atlantic Monthly Press. One of Michigan's most acclaimed authors writes candidly and poignantly about his rugged Michigan childhood, coming-of-age, literary influences, personal struggles and his passion for hunting and trout fishing.

Open the Door: The Life and Music of Betty Carter, by William R. Bauer. University of Michigan Press. Drawn from interviews with the Detroit-born jazz performer, this book studies her life as a singer and businesswoman, her musical contributions and her influence on jazz today.

Preserve, Protect and Defend: An Illustrated History of the Michigan State Police in the Twentieth Century, by Phillip D. Schertzing. Turner Publishing Company. Incorporating archival photographs and personal recollections, this history studies the State Police's officers and activities from its origins and development up to the present day.

Public Gardens of Michigan, by Miriam Easton Rutz. Michigan State University Press. This colorful book highlights the beauty and architectural design found in the public gardens across Michigan, including the Frederick Meijer Gardens in Grand Rapids and the Nichols Arboretum in Ann Arbor.

A Smile as Big as the Moon: A Teacher, His Class, and Their Unforgettable Journey, by Michael Kersjes with Joe Layden. St. Martin's Press. This remarkable story tells of the author's successful efforts to bring his Forest Hills Northern special education class to NASA's Space Camp.

Vintage Views of Leelanau County, by M. Christine Byron and Thomas R. Wilson. Sleeping Bear Press. The historical photographs, postcards and tourist advertisements in this book help capture a distinctive era of Leelanau's past on the shores of Lake Michigan.

The Wanigan: A Life on the River, by Gloria Whelan. Illustrated by Emily Martindale. Alfred A. Knopf. As her family and a team of lumberjacks journey downriver, a nineteenth-century young girl experiences Michigan's timber country.

West to Far Michigan: Settling the Lower Peninsula, 1815-1860, by Kenneth E. Lewis. Michigan State University Press. This book studies how the initial settlement and agricultural development of the mid-nineteenth-century frontier helped shape Michigan's expansion and growth into a modern industrial state.

White Hurricane: A Great Lakes November Gale and America's Deadliest Maritime Disaster, by David G. Brown. International Marine. Complete with harrowing personal recollections and local newspaper accounts, this book examines the autumn gales of November 1913, when more than forty Great Lakes ships were lost or stranded.

Windjammers: Songs of the Great Lakes Sailors, by Ivan H. Walton with Joe Grimm. Wayne State University Press. Shedding light on the daily life of a Great Lakes sailor, this book contains music, lyrics and brief histories of dozens of chanteys and songs on sailing, lumbering and lake disasters.

New Association of Rural and Small Libraries Formed

by Casey Kremers, Department of History, Arts and Libraries

After many years of consideration and identified need, the Association of Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL) is a reality. The Center for the Study of Rural Librarianship, at Clarion University of Pennsylvania, recently announced the formation of ARSL, comprised of libraries of all types, including public, school, small urban branches, special and corporate, and small academic. The defining characteristics of participating libraries are a limited budget and a diverse clientele. Librarians, support staff, governmental officials, trustees, friends of libraries and professionals from other fields are part of this association.

ARSL, supported by annual membership dues of \$39, is a virtual association that will share information electronically and will meet annually in a physical location. Its mission is to enhance the development of libraries on a global scale. By becoming a member, you will receive:

- A 20 percent discount off the annual conference registration

- Copies of reports, policies, surveys, etc., shared by members
- Online access to the content of Rural Libraries
- Subscription to rurll-l listserv and its archive of messages
- A calendar of events contributed by members
- Job notices and the ability to post positions
- The opportunity to participate in real-time chat sessions conducted by library leaders on a variety of hot topics
- In the future, the ability to enroll in courses for continuing education or academic credit

For more information about ARSL or to register for membership, visit <http://arsl.clarion.edu>.

Books Online

by Kyle Kay Ripley, Reference Assistant, Library of Michigan

The Internet allows us to find books to read without leaving our homes. netLibrary, Digital Book Index and Gutenberg Project are some of the most popular sites for accessing books online. The Online Book Page is also a good source for finding links to sites that have books online. There are others, but these are good places to start.

netLibrary (www.netlibrary.com) allows users to read ebooks online. The Library of Michigan has purchased more than 10,000 ebook titles from netLibrary, accessible to all Michigan residents through the Michigan eLibrary (MeL) at www.mel.org. Any Michigan resident can create a free account, which allows you to "check out" books from your home computer. You have access to the titles in MeL, as well as any titles that your library has purchased and the publicly accessible ebooks collection. This is searchable by author, title, subject, keyword, publisher, year published or ISBN number. An advanced search will allow you to use Boolean terms. Titles you may find range from *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *Southern Cooking* and *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Understanding Men and Women* to *The Law and the Public's Health*, *Dealing with Difficult People in the Library* and *Practical Echocardiography*. Authors you will find include classics like Louisa May Alcott, Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald and others like ex-NFL coach Bill Walsh, Jack Daniels (no, his book is not about whiskey) and Sam Houston.

The Digital Book Index (<http://digital-bookindex.com/>) is a great aid to finding free and for-charge online text from a large list of major publishers, organizations and archives. The use of the site is free. It is searchable by author, title key words, author and title, and publisher. You may browse by subject, publisher's lists or an alphabetical index by author. Search results will display a list of online text from free sites like the Gutenberg Project and from publisher's sites. Text from publisher's sites like Simon and Schuster will indicate the charges you will incur.

The Gutenberg Project (<http://www.promo.net/pg/>) has three basic sections: light literature, heavy literature and references. Light literature includes titles like *Alice in Wonderland*, *Aesop's Fables*, etc. Heavy literature covers works like the Bible, Shakespeare, or *Moby Dick*. References include thesauri, almanacs, encyclopedias, dictionaries, etc. You can do a quick search by author and/or title/word(s). Advanced searching allows you to search by author, title, subject, notes field, language and Library of Congress class.

The Online Books Page (<http://digital.library.upenn.edu/books/>) from the University of Pennsylvania has over 18,000 listings. You may search by author, title or subject or browse the serials or new listings. Links to archival texts include parts of serials like *The Atlantic Monthly* and *Register of Debates in Congress*. Links to online book sites include titles from Zane Grey and Mary Roberts Rinehart and Homer's *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*.

Finding Book Reviews: The Good Is Getting Better

by Linda Neely, Public Services Librarian, Library of Michigan

Selecting materials for library collections and adding to your reader's advisory knowledge arsenal can be arduous. In addition to a dizzying number of publishers' announcements, we all must read reviews to keep abreast of what's out there. Here is a refresher on old favorite review media and some electronic services that can make your collection development and reader's advisory job easier.

Major Media

Most of us are familiar with the print versions of major review serials such as *Booklist*, *Choice*, *Forecast*, *Kirkus Reviews*, *Library Journal*, *Publisher's Weekly*, *School Library Journal*, etc. In addition to these journals, which review multiple subjects in multiple formats, there are a plethora of journals devoted to specific subject areas, formats and/or audience groups. Here are just a few examples of esoteric journals that have Web sites where current edition book reviews can be read. These also provide subscription services or searchable review archives.

- *Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books* - Includes password protected searchable database service.
<http://alexia.lis.uiuc.edu/puboff/bccb/>
- *Educational Media Reviews Online* (formerly *Journal of Academic Media Librarianship*) - Includes reviews of audiovisual materials.
<http://libweb.lib.buffalo.edu/emro/search.html>
- *E-Streams* - A great source for reviews of books on pure science and technology topics. <http://www.e-streams.com/>
- *New York Review of Books* - Wins the prize for erudite literary reviews.
<http://www.nybooks.com/>

Subscription Services

Busy librarians may not have time to page through multiple journals and visit multiple Web sites in search of reviews. That's where subscription services come in very handy. Some notable examples:

- *ChoiceReviews.online* - Users receive a monthly email list of titles indexed under subject descriptors they have chosen. Full reviews for the selected titles are retrieved by entering one's password at the *Choice* Web site. <http://www.choicereviews.org>.
- *Education Review* - Reviews current education publications and notifies subscribers via email when these reviews are available.
<http://www.ed.asu.edu/edrev/index.html>
- The *Library Journal* book review site - Provides immediate access to best-seller and hot topic reviews and subscription service.
<http://libraryjournal.reviewsnews.com/>

- *Netsurfer Digest* - Reviews electronic books, Web sites and books about the Web, with updates for each new edition. www.netsurf.com

Publishers

We can't forget altogether about publishers. Many of them now provide tables of contents and sample chapters of new books on their Web sites. Many provide email notification of new books and reports as they are released, and some even offer links to (albeit favorable) reviews.

Off the Beaten Path

For reviews of obscure and unusual materials, you might try one of these independent review sites.

- *ACQNET* - Provides links to a broad selection of online review sites covering all types of material and all audience levels. <http://acqweb.library.vanderbilt.edu/acqweb/bookrev.html>
- *The Independent Reviews Site* - Provides a limited number of reviews on recently published fiction and non-fiction books, poetry books, movies, music CDs and DVDs, plus picks of the month in several categories. <http://www.theindependentreviewssite.org/>
- *Ruminator Review* - Offers limited reviews on current fiction, non-fiction, children's and poetry books. <http://www.ruminator.com/hmr/>
- *Seized by the Tale* - Provides reviews of comics and fantasy books. <http://www.flowerfire.com/seized/>

The Michigan eLibrary (MeL)

For reviews of older materials, librarians and patrons still rely on *Book Review Digest*. The Wilson online version currently available through MeL goes back to 1983. And finally, let's all remember to check the MeL-Libraries-Books/Readers Advisory links at <http://mel.org/libraries/LIBS-books.html>.

Books on Tape – Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

by Andrew Wilson, SBPH Services and Data Analyst, Library of Michigan

Do you know someone who enjoys good books but is no longer able to read print? Did you know that people who are unable to use standard print materials due to a visual or physical disability have at a public library they can use, where books on tape or in Braille are mailed directly to their door?

The Michigan network of regional and sub-regional libraries serving the blind and physically handicapped offers more than 43,000 books on cassette tape and more than 13,000 books in Braille. Just like the print books, these cassette and Braille books are unabridged and contain all the information found in the print versions. All types of reading material, from biographies and how-to books, romances and science fiction to the latest best sellers, are available free to qualifying individuals. Over 50 magazines are also available on cassette or in Braille.

Anyone who is unable to read or use standard print reading material, through either a temporary or permanent visual or physical limitation, is eligible. So if standard print has become difficult for you or someone you know, please call 1-800-992-9012 statewide (1-888-968-2737 in Wayne County, 1-800-562-8985 in the Upper Peninsula) to find out more and to register for this free library service.

SBPH Volunteer Narration Program

by Andrew Wilson, SBPH Services and Data Analyst, Library of Michigan

The Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (SBPH) receives more than 2,000 books each year from the Library of Congress National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLSBPH). These books are recorded onto special format cassettes to circulate to our patrons. However, these 2,000 books represent only about 5 percent of all the books published in the United States each year. The Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies' *Revised Standards and Guidelines of Service* states that 57 regional libraries around the United

States “shall acquire or produce reading material to supplement the national collection,” emphasizing “titles of regional and local importance.”

At the Library of Michigan SBPH, a group of 15 active narrators help meet the demand of SBPH patrons who are looking for books about Michigan, by Michigan authors or books that are not available in a format other than print. In the past year we have been able to add several books to our collection, ranging from titles about Great Lakes ships and shipwrecks to children's books to Michigan-based mysteries.

The Library of Michigan SBPH has its own recording studio for narrators to use. The studio, purchased with Library of Michigan Foundation funds in 1990, consists of a sound-proof room for the narrator and an attached station for a monitor. Narrators have the option of coming in to the Library of Michigan or recording books in their home by using a special four-track recorder that we loan to them.

For more information on the Volunteer Narration Program at the Library of Michigan SBPH, contact Sonya Norris at (800) 992-9012 or (517) 373-3967.

Eight Steps to a Teen Book Discussion Group That Works!

*by Kevin A. R. King, Lead Librarian Teen Services,
Kalamazoo Public Library*

When given the choice between starting a teen book discussion group and a story time with wild toddlers and chatty parents, many youth-serving librarians will select the toddlers. Fear not; teen book discussion groups are easy and quite painless. Just follow these simple steps and you will be on the road to an interactive and rewarding experience.

Step One: Recruit from within. The best place to begin building a group of teens, which will eventually become the core of your discussion group, is your own library! Look around you and identify the teens that browse the shelves, check out stacks of books or just hang out and read. Those are the youth you'll initially want in your discussion group. Soon these teens will tell their friends, and you'll watch the group grow. **WARNING** – The optimal number for a productive discussion is 12 to 15. Larger numbers might prevent some teens from chiming in during the discussion. Keep a sign-up sheet, and always call and remind teens the night before the discussion.

Step Two: Choose good discussion books. This may be obvious, but many librarians make the mistake of choosing books that might be a great read, but not a great book to discuss. Books that hover around 200 pages work best because today's teens have tons of other stuff going on in their lives. Some librarians let the teens choose the books, and others choose the books themselves. If the teens choose, you might be faced with some of the problems outlined above. Another possibility is that the group might transform into a science fiction, or other genre, book discussion group. While this is not a bad thing, it may alienate future teens from joining the group. When a librarian chooses the books, a broad range of books from different genres can be read. This option will also allow the librarian to introduce the “hidden gems” collecting dust on the shelves.

Step Three: Everyone should read the same book! Purchase 10 to 12 copies of the book in paperback, catalog them and check them out to group members. Better yet, don't catalog them and give them away at the end of the discussion. The price of 10 or 12 paperbacks is negligible compared to price of a couple hardback books. If money is still an issue, approach a local business and propose that for \$50 a month they can promote teens and reading. Ask Sally Struthers to do a commercial! The other obvious benefit to choosing just one book to discuss is that it will make for a better discussion because all readers are familiar with the text.

Step Four: Provide food. If you feed them, they will come. Ask your local pizza joint to donate a few pies a month. Show them the Sally Struthers commercial. Bake some cookies. Buy a few two-liters of carbonated beverages. Providing food guarantees they'll come back. Chew before you chat because watching a teen munch pizza and discuss an action scene is pretty gross. This time is also great for personal interactions.

Step Five: Use thought provoking, well-written discussion questions as a tool to inspire interactions. Nothing kills the excitement of rapping about a great book more than a daunting list of questions that remind teens of an English exam. Questions should spur conversation, not kill it. Don't get hung up on answering every single question; if it is not working, move on. Try questions that evoke a response, such as: “Have you ever felt the way the main character felt when he discovered his mother was an alien?” Another tactic is to have the teens write queries before the discussion begins. You can also find questions on publishers' Web sites or from other libraries.

Step Six: Facilitate the discussion; don't lead the discussion. During the first few discussions, getting a response from the readers might be difficult. The natural response is to fall into lecture mode and drone on about your own reactions to the book. The

librarian's job is to encourage the teens to lead the discussion, ask the unwritten questions and debate their reactions to the novel. Leave the lecturing to the teachers, and have fun with the teens!

Step Seven: Schedule a consistent time, date and place. Teens like to know that every month at a specific time, they can get together with other readers, eat some food and chat about books. Consistency will also strengthen a core group. Each session should last no more than 60 to 75 minutes. Make the meeting place really casual with beanbags or comfy chairs.

Step Eight: Keep it real. Teens can spot a phony. They realize when an adult is not very interested in discussing books. Facilitators must have fun! If you do not want to be there, then don't even bother starting a book discussion group. Last but not least, make sure you read the book. Re-read the book if you read it in the past.

The above eight steps should serve as a basis for establishing a group in your library. Each community is different, so you may have to change a few of the steps or at least tailor them to fit your needs. Most importantly, a teen book discussion group should reinforce the fact that reading is cool and that discussing books brings individuals together. If your library can only sponsor one program for teens, a book discussion group is a low-effort, cost-effective way to invest in the teens and the library.

Genesee District Library Honored With John Cotton Dana Library Public Relations Award

by Valerie A. McNiff, Executive Director, Genesee District Library

The Genesee District Library is one of nine winners nationally in the 2003 John Cotton Dana Library Public Relations Award Contest. Recipients of these highly competitive and coveted awards will be honored at the ALA/CLA Conference in Toronto this June. Following the conference, the ALA Library and Resource Center will retain all winning entries for two years to send to interested libraries via interlibrary loan.

The award recognizes outstanding achievement in the promotion of library services and winning entries set the standard for excellence in library public relations. The GDL's submission featured the Genesee Valley Demonstration Location (2002 State Librarian's Excellence Award winner) and the current operating philosophy,

"Taking the Services to the People." The advertising campaign is ongoing and started before the library opened. All mediums were used, and within the first six months of operation, an average of 7,000 persons per month passed through the doors and more than 2,000 new library cards were issued at that location. This award was only made possible through the support of the visionary Genesee District Library board, the staff and, most importantly, the patrons.



by Kyle Kay Ripley, Reference Assistant, Library of Michigan

Book Clubs

Book Clubs for Kids

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/brcafe.html>

Simon & Schuster Book Discussions

<http://bbs.simonsays.com/cgi-bin/Ultimate.cgi>

Book Clubs by Interest

<http://www.book-clubs.com/>

Book Clubs On and Offline

http://www.chistell.com/book_clubs.htm

"Starting a Book Club in a Mid-sized Public Library: A Practical Guide" (an article from *MLA Forum*, v. 1, issue 1, February 2002)

<http://www.mlaforum.org/volumeI/issue1/starting.html>

Chapter-A-Day Online Book Club

<http://www.chapter-a-day.com>

Generous Books

<http://www.generousbooks.com/>

MosaicBooks.com: Largest Listing of African-American Book Clubs on the Internet

<http://www.mosaicbooks.com/bookclub.html>

SeniorNet: Book Discussion Section for Seniors

<http://www.seniornet.org/php/default.php?PageID=5744&Version=0&Font=0>

Blending Beverages and Books: Library Coffee Shops

Java Too at Wayne State U.

by Jill Kuskowski, Information Officer, Wayne State University Library System

With over 200 cups of coffee flowing from behind its counter each day, the Java Too Coffee Shop at the David Adamany Undergraduate Library at Detroit's Wayne State University helps students, staff and faculty start their day with a jolt of caffeine and a smile. "We get lots of librarians and library staff, but we're certainly not limited to just them," said Masai Wa-Omari, an employee of Java Too since its opening. "We get anywhere from about 200 to 300 customers a day from all over campus," he said.

Located in what used to be an area designated for vending machines, Java Too was born after a previous library dean expressed an interest in the growing trend of coffee shops in libraries, according to Don Cowan, facilities manager for the Wayne State Library System. "We're fairly unusual here in that we allow eating and drinking in all areas of the library," said Cowan.

Java Too is one of three coffee shops owned by Frieda Sampson, one of which is housed in the Detroit Public Library and the other in downtown Detroit. Prices range from \$1 for a small cup of coffee to a little over \$3 for some of the high-end coffee drinks. "The shop here in the library does the best out of all the stores though," said Wa-Omari. With a staff of five employees, the shop is open year-round, with its busiest times in the fall and winter semesters and, of course, during finals. The shop accommodates students during this hectic time by staying open later, in harmony with the library's extended hours.

As for the future, Wa-Omari wants to continue to offer the campus community what it wants—good coffee at fair prices. "I'd like to see us grow with the library."

Grace A. Dow Memorial Library's Coffee Service Experience

by Melissa Barnard, Director, Grace A. Dow Memorial Library

When the library board of the Grace A. Dow Memorial Library in Midland began its discussion

of coffee service in the library, board members did not anticipate that securing a vendor would be the major stumbling block.

The board had identified the reasons for pursuing serving coffee in the library:

1. Response to community request.
2. Attract new/potential users.
3. Enhance the comfort and social aspect of the library.

Additionally, it was decided that leasing the space and service to a coffee vendor would create some revenue for the library but that was not the primary motivation for initiating the service. The service would start small, serving specialty coffees and teas. Drinks should be made on the premises as ordered. Only drinks purchased in the library would be allowed. The area where coffee/tea is allowed should be restricted. The target audience would include new/potential library users and adults in general.

A letter from the director of planning and community development for the City of Midland outlined the permitted uses in the zoning district where the library is located. A coffee bar could not be constructed or operated in the district as a principal land use. A coffee bar that is limited to serving patrons in the library and is incidental to the primary function of the library would be permitted.

An informal survey was conducted in the library. Of the 513 responses received, 438 expressed support for serving coffee in the library, and 75 did not support it.

On paper, the Grace A. Dow Memorial Library looked like a candidate for a thriving coffee bar. Walk-in traffic was approximately 400,000 in 2001/2002. Three conference rooms, a meeting room and a 266-seat auditorium are frequently in use. Parking is free and convenient to the library. The library is open 71 hours per week, including Friday nights and Sunday afternoons.

Five private coffee businesses were contacted to determine their interest and to solicit advice on the project. None of the businesses were interested in extending their services to the library based on the questionable profitability of the venture. Two of the vendors suggested that the library provide incentives to the businesses – purchasing equipment, waiving lease and utility costs and delaying sharing profits until the business is established and realizing a good profit.

Beaner's Gourmet Coffee, a franchising company, was contacted and confirmed the profitability concerns expressed by the other businesses. Again an incentive payment was suggested. The library was not a good match with Starbucks since they

concentrate on larger markets, such as hotels, hospitals and universities.

Despite the lack of interest in developing a coffee service at the library, the businesses contacted did provide useful comments:

1. Serving coffee in the library is a good idea.
2. The coffee bar should be visible to people when they enter the library or easy to locate.
3. Restricting the area where coffee can be consumed may cause customer complaints.
4. Service should include some food and beverages besides coffee and tea.
5. The current library hours are fine for a coffee service.
6. The noise of the equipment may be a major issue with library users.
7. It is difficult to maintain good, dependable staff.

The library board did not support the idea that the library should provide incentives to a private business owner to operate a coffee service in the library. Although the board was not ready to dismiss the idea of coffee service in the library, there didn't appear to be other options.

Reports on the coffee service at the library consistently made the front page of the local paper. We received comments, questions and an offer from those who read the articles. The Arnold Center, a local organization that finds and provides employment for people with disabilities, contacted library staff and inquired about becoming partners on a coffee service. One of their goals is to put their clients in positions to become contributing members of the community. The Arnold Center is willing to explore state and foundation grant monies to provide start-up costs and training. Although there are many details to discuss and resolve before we can move forward, this cooperative effort certainly is encouraging. Hopefully, the future is bright for coffee in the library.

The Zen of Cappuccino

by Marilyn Berry, Librarian, Bad Axe Public Library

People are nostalgic about their libraries. Even people who don't currently use their libraries are glad we're here; they support us. They are sure

that young people use the library, and they rank us as one of the most valuable municipal services. Our survival may depend upon understanding why they feel this way.

What did we do to generate such devotion? I suggest that when they were young, people were habitually induced to come to the library and to be still. In that stillness, they made a connection to themselves and to their surroundings. While they were here they felt special. They felt holy. They felt that they were being rocked in the cradle of civilization. Oddly enough, that may be why many passionate liberals grow up to be so conservative about their libraries. They don't necessarily take the time to actually use their libraries, and they may not have taken the time to reconsider our value, but they are sure that we are valuable because, once, they felt special here.

What can we do to ensure that the next generation will feel that way? Well, we have to get them to come in and sit down. But we are up against some fierce competition: television, the Internet, Happy Meals, the mall, the general milieu of "grab 'n' go" America.

And the big question: Do we have something to offer them? How are we to distinguish ourselves from the commercial world while simultaneously competing with it? Do we still have a mission? I think so. Unlike the Internet, we offer in-depth information. Unlike Barnes and Noble, we stock unprofitable titles. We give thoughtful service. We attempt to represent without bias all sides of every issue. We are the guardians of democracy in a time when that isn't being valued as much as it should be.

Don't you think that librarians once bemoaned the distractions of radio and penny dreadfuls? Haven't we always walked that fine line between quality and cheap flash? Let's get people in the door. Let's induce them to stay awhile. Then, let's make them feel that they are special for having made the choice to come in.

Bring them in the way we always have. Give 'em rock and rap and Playstation. Give 'em best sellers and bodice rippers, pop-up books and quirky programming. And having gotten them in the door, give 'em an incentive to stay. Give 'em cappuccino. Give 'em cozy play areas and then, at last, surround them with the culture and wisdom and taste.

Give 'em some credit. They are fundamentally intelligent. They love libraries.

Peter White Public Library Partners With "Knead to Read"

"Knead to Read," an innovative children's literacy program that began in Petoskey in 1998, recently launched a Marquette chapter in partnership with the Peter White Public Library, jump-started by a grant from the Marquette Community Foundation. The philanthropic program aims to spark and enhance the reading skills of early elementary students. Certified massage therapists volunteer their time and talent to perform chair massages once a month for the public in exchange for donations, which purchase books for selected students. The children choose their own books, so they are empowered by decision-making and inspired by their own choices. In Marquette, the group offers the monthly chair massages at the Peter White Public Library.

The original chapter of "Knead to Read" has touched the lives of nearly 400 children and recently gave away its 1000th free book. One school administrator said of the program,

"I can't tell you how delighted these children were! Their eyes sparkled and they couldn't believe they would 'get to keep the book!'"

Book Buddies Help Kids Read at Mid-Michigan Libraries

In an effort to improve the literacy skills of children, the Mt. Pleasant Michigan Kennel Club started the Book Buddies program at Veterans Memorial Library in Mt. Pleasant. The first such program in the state, it is modeled after a similar program in Salt Lake City. Book Buddies uses certified therapy dogs as literacy mentors. By reading in a quiet, comfortable atmosphere with trusted dogs, the children become more relaxed. The dogs build the children's self-confidence.

The program was a four-week series of thirty-minute reading sessions with child, dog and handler. Children with reading problems were encouraged to enroll, but the program was for any child who wanted to read to dogs. The targeted audience was third graders. The children were given a "pawtographed" book for their reading level and a picture of them with the dog. Children, dogs and handlers enjoyed the program, and it was well received by parents. In January and February the program was held at the Alma Public Library.

Southfield Public Library's Battle of the Books – A Popular Reading Tradition

"Battle of the Books" is a program designed and produced by the Youth Services Division of the Southfield Public Library and sponsored by the Friends of the Southfield Public Library to encourage the sport of reading and to give recognition to those who like to read. This is the 24th year for the 4th & 5th grade "Battle of the Books" and the 16th year for the "Battle of the Books" - Middle School Challenge.

All fourth through eighth-graders who live or attend school in Southfield or Lathrup Village are eligible to participate by organizing teams from their grade. Each team must consist of 2 to 6 team members and 1 or 2 adult team managers. Each battle has a selected list of seven books from which the team members read. Although team members do not have to read every book on the list, it is recommended that two team members read each book. The team members have about 10 weeks to read the books.

On the evening of the battles, team members participate in a contest with other teams by answering questions based on the books. Although one team eventually may win first place, everyone who participates in this great program is a winner.

The names of the members of the winning team are engraved on a plaque, which is displayed in the Youth Services department. In 2002, there were 111 teams with 607 students who participated in the three battles, and there were about 450 people in the audience at each battle.

Children's Theater Program at the Saugatuck/Douglas District Library

The Saugatuck/Douglas District Library in Douglas has a wonderful children's theater program called the Notable Pages. Children in first through fifth grades come to the library once a week and rehearse musical plays, primarily based on books. They put on performances for the community in several locations. The library employee who directs the children, Nyla Hensley, also adapts the plays and does all of the music. It is a wonderful experience for the nearly 30 children who participate each year and a great way to showcase the library.



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